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**AN EVALUATION OF CURRENT HOMEWORK PRACTICES
IN GRADES 4, 5, AND 6 OF THE
BREMERTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington College of Education
Ellensburg, Washington**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education**

**by
Donald M. Fujimoto
August 1959**

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COLLECTION

A Thesis

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the Faculty of

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of the Requirements for the degree

Master of Education

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by

Donald M. Williams

August 1961

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The present era of technological change has brought about many cultural shifts. It has also necessitated that schools constantly evaluate their curriculum in order to keep pace with modern methods and ideas.

One area of the curriculum which has been overlooked, however, is the problem of homework. There are two schools of thought on this problem. Some authorities believe that homework should be abolished because it is of no real additional value to school learning. Some, on the other hand, believe that homework is a very valuable aid to learning and should not be abolished. Experiments and research conducted up to the present time have not conclusively supported either school of thought.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study (1) to review research on the problem of homework; (2) to formulate, from this research, recommended considerations for a homework program; (3) to study current homework practices in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of the Bremerton, Washington, Public Schools through the use of questionnaires to teachers and parents; (4) to

analyze these findings, in view of current research, and recommend improvements which might foster better relationships between the school and community, teacher and parent, teacher and pupil, parent and child, teacher and teacher, and teacher and administrator.

Importance of the study. The values of homework have been the subject of considerable debate for many years. Parents and teachers have argued pro and con on this problem, but comparatively little research has been conducted in this area.

The selection of this problem for study was made after careful investigation by the writer toward the end of his first year of teaching. This action was prompted by conflicts experienced during the year with some parents on the assignment of homework. Upon questioning other teachers, the writer found that they, too, experienced such conflicts. He also encountered many different philosophies among teachers. Some did not believe in assigning any homework, while others assigned extensively.

Considering the inadequate amount of research and the varied views of parents and teachers on this issue, the writer felt that a research study at the local level would prove to be worthwhile. It was also felt that such a study would help to ease some of the misunderstandings

between parents and teachers and to foster better relationship between the school and community.

Scope of the study. This study was limited to (1) an analysis of current homework practices in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of the Bremerton Public Schools, and (2) current literature on the homework problem. From these data, suggestions for an improved program were offered.

Method and procedure used. All available materials on the subject of homework were first reviewed. Next, with the permission of the school board and the school administration of Bremerton, Washington, work was undertaken to formulate and distribute questionnaires to the 75 teachers and to the parents of 2,287 pupils enrolled in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades as of April 1, 1959. Since it was desired to get as complete and accurate an analysis of the problem as possible, a total rather than a random sampling was taken.

The open-form questionnaire was chosen to elicit responses that would be valuable in an evaluative study. Background material obtained through a careful study of the research conducted up to the present time was used in constructing the questionnaires. Personal data questions were included to investigate possible factors

that may correlate with homework practices. Copies of the questionnaires to teachers and to parents, with letters explaining the purpose of the study, may be found in Appendices A and B, respectively.

The returned questionnaires were analyzed by an item-by-item tabulation and by a listing of verbatim quotations and paraphrasing of parents' and teachers' comments.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Homework. The definition of the term homework was of vital concern in this study. In many cases, the writer found misinterpretation of this term or lack of agreement as to its meaning. Certain authors have used the term homework to refer only to work done outside of the classroom, while others have used the term to refer to any assignment given by the teacher. Perhaps it would be best to refer to Webster, whose definition of the term homework is: "Any assignment for study or preparation outside the classroom" (13:476).

At this point, it may be well to introduce a conflicting argument concerning the term homework which arose during the analysis of the questionnaires to teachers and parents. In many cases, respondents replied that no homework was given but that the pupils were

required to do their unfinished class work at home. In view of the definition of the term homework, unfinished class work must be considered as homework because it is actually assigned work to be done outside of the classroom.

The term homework, then, was used in this study to refer to any assignment given by the teacher to be done outside of the classroom. This included any work done in the library or resource room during school hours, as well as any work done outside of the classroom. It included any work done at home or elsewhere at any time other than during school hours. It also included one exception, that is, any work assigned to be done at home but done in the classroom by the more capable pupil.

Traditional homework. The term traditional homework, used by many authors, was generally agreed to be work the teacher assigned in the drill subjects, such as arithmetic and spelling, to be done at home. This type of homework was formerly used in many cases as punishment. In other instances, it was used to support the belief in the learning theory that drill and more drill is the key to learning.

Assignment. The term assignment has been used many times with reference to homework. Homework can be a part of an assignment, but obviously all assignments

need not be homework since some assignments could be done in the classroom. The term assignment, therefore, was used to refer to all assigned work, whether it is done in the classroom or at home.

Classroom. The term classroom was referred to as the room in which the teacher and pupils have been assigned for the purpose of instruction.

Respondent. The term respondent was used to refer to persons who answered the questionnaires.

Intermediate grades. In this study, the term intermediate grades was used to refer to grades four, five, and six. It was necessary to define this term since many school systems use the term "intermediate" in referring to higher or to different combinations of grades.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Literature on the problem of homework was very limited. Much of the materials written were found in magazines; others were found in textbooks and newspapers. It is the writer's feeling, however, that the growing awareness by parents and teachers of the importance of homework will necessitate further studies on this problem.

I. HISTORY AND ORIGIN OF THE HOMEWORK PROBLEM

The practice of assigning homework has become a controversial problem in modern education. The problem of homework started as early as 1904 in Germany when a German educator experimented on twelve- and thirteen-year old children and concluded that homework hurt rather than helped children in their school work. Soon thereafter, the Board of Education in London recommended the abolishment of homework at the twelve- and thirteen-year old level. About a year later, an American educator agreed with the German educator's findings and recommended that homework should be abolished (4:16-39).

From 1905 to 1927, little was done on the problem of homework (3:1-4). Between 1927 and this date, more research has been conducted on this subject, but educators

and parents continue to disagree on this problem. All this arguing is not wasted effort, however, as it has brought about combined studies by both parents and teachers in attempts to solve their common problem. Most of the work done to solve this problem has been done in individual schools, usually at the level of the parent and teacher.

Strang conducted a research project in 1955, but it was largely at a descriptive level. She concluded that more research is needed in this area (12:399-400). The present writer believes that Strang intended this to mean experimental studies. The survey conducted by Strang is one of the most recent at the national level.

More recently, a national survey on the problem of homework was conducted by the National Education Association. The results of this survey support more strongly the fact that the problem is being handled more on the local level than on the national level.

What, then, is the solution to this problem? Will the problem of homework be brushed aside by some schools and left to the decisions of the parents and teachers in others? Will this problem be overlooked in the colleges that prepare the nation's teachers? Or is it necessary that reliable and valid studies be made so that decisions reached by each teacher can be justified? It is the writer's opinion that the solution cannot be of the

hit-or-miss type. It must be one based on scientific study methods which would justify each teacher's procedure in assigning homework.

II. REVIEW OF PAST STUDIES

Unavailability of many studies on the problem of homework has limited this review to the studies of five major authors. The selection of these five studies was based on the prominence of the author, based on past reputation, educational background and experience, upon availability of materials, and the scope of the studies. Most of the other writings done in this area have been biased and based mainly on opinions.

Study by Di Napoli. One of the most extensive studies on the problem of homework was done by Dr. Peter J. Di Napoli, Teachers College, Columbia University, in 1937. The study was conducted ". . . to determine whether compulsory or voluntary homework is conducive to greater academic accomplishment and more desirable outcomes in the New York City Elementary Schools" (3:1).

The study covered the history and universality of the problem very thoroughly up to the year 1936. Di Napoli showed that the problem of homework is not

unique to American schools. The problem was prevalent at that time in England, Scotland, France, and Australia. His summary of the findings of the studies up to 1936 was that they were "few but varied." For that period his study was relatively carefully constructed and analyzed. The conclusions of the study read as follows:

1. Compulsory homework in the fifth grade, male and female, favors achievement as measured by a battery of standardized tests and there is a tendency for this difference to approach significance.

2. Voluntary homework in the seventh grade, male and female, favors achievement as measured by a battery of standardized tests, but the differences are so slight as to be insignificant. Certainly from these data one cannot argue that either compulsory or voluntary homework leads to greater academic accomplishment in the seventh grade.

Specific Conclusions--Metropolitan Achievement Tests

Compulsory homework tends to lead to better achievement in:

1. Spelling: 5B male and female, 7B male and female
2. Reading: 5B male and female
3. Vocabulary: 5B female
4. Arithmetic problems: 5B male and female
5. Literature: 5B male and female
6. History: 5B male and female
7. Geography: 5B male and female

Voluntary homework tends to lead to greater accomplishment in:

1. Arithmetic fundamentals: 5B male and female, 7B male and female
2. Arithmetic problems: 7B male and female
3. English: 7B male and female
4. Literature: 7B male and female
5. History: 7B male and female

The differences in favor of compulsory or voluntary homework are not reliable when measured by the results in:

1. Reading: 7B male and female
2. Vocabulary: 5B male, 7B male and female
3. English: 5B male and female
4. Literature: 7B female
5. Geography: 7B male and female

Specific Conclusions--I. E. R. Activities Inventories

Compulsory homework tends to result in:

1. A greater loss of interest in arithmetic:
5B male and female, 7B male and female
2. A greater loss of interest in English:
5B female and 7B male
3. A greater gain of interest in history: 5B male
and female and 7B male
4. A greater gain of interest in geography:
5B female

Voluntary homework tends to lead to:

1. A greater loss of interest in English:
7B female

The differences between the gains in interests between compulsory and voluntary homework are not significant in:

1. Geography: 5B male, 7B male and female
2. History: 7B female
3. English: 5B male (3:41-42)

The writer questions part of the method of study used by Di Napoli with the experimental (voluntary homework) group. He structured his directions to the teachers of this group in such a way as to make the teachers passive in their relations with the children in regard to any homework done. Any passive attitude of teachers would very probably not motivate children, and, therefore,

the writer feels that the experimental group tended to be more of a "no homework" group instead of a voluntary homework group. The letters of directions to both groups, the experimental group and the control group, may be found in Appendices C and D, respectively (3:19-20).

Some authors have interpreted the results of Di Napoli's study to support their own contention that homework is of little value. This they did by placing strong emphasis on the second general conclusion, which states that "the differences are so slight as to be insignificant." This part of the statement was specifically related only to the seventh grade group, but these authors have failed to report the areas of significance found in the study. Their interpretation has been somewhat structured by Di Napoli's final recommendation that compulsory homework be abolished and that a uniform system of voluntary homework be established.

Study by McGill. Dr. J. V. McGill, of John Adams High School in New York, made several studies in the area of homework in the high school social studies subjects. All of his studies reviewed by the writer were opposed to homework.

The particular study under evaluation here was based on an experiment which set up the experimental

group with no homework given at all, while the control group was assigned or forced to do homework for each recitation. This experiment showed that homework, assigned or unassigned in the high school social studies classes in the John Adams School, made no difference as indicated by ability tests in social studies. It does not, however, prove that all homework is worthless. McGill recommended that further study which would be conducted on a longer time and which would include improved teaching procedures, was needed (8:48-53). This study also did not answer the problem concerning the value of homework programs utilizing carefully planned, well motivated assignments.

Study by Langdon and Stout. Langdon and Stout premised their study with the belief that homework was of definite value to the elementary school child (7:359-61). They assessed the attitudes and opinions of parents and made some recommendations for improving homework programs. Their study showed, further, that parents favor homework but questioned the purpose, amount, and type of homework given to their children.

Study by the N.E.A. A recent study by the National Education Association, published in the September, 1957, issue of their Journal, was an accumulation of homework

practices used in different parts of the United States (14:366-69). These areas included cities in the states of Colorado, New York, Wisconsin, California, Florida, and Arizona. The study showed that all of the schools represented were in agreement that homework was important. In most cases, the problem was handled through cooperative planning by the schools and the home.

Study by Strang. In another recent survey of homework practices and studies in the United States, Strang briefly reviewed the various methods being practiced by schools to alleviate the problem of homework (12:399-400). Different schools have used the voluntary study hall method, the supervised classroom study period method, as well as many other different practices dealing directly with the problem of homework itself. She stated that the type of homework given is usually influenced by the type of tests given. For example, a teacher preparing to give a test on the rules of English may assign homework to prepare the child for this test. The writer would question this statement, however, as the opposite cause and effect relationship may also be true. In other words, the type of tests given may be determined by the homework assigned.

Strang did not make a conclusively pro or con statement, however, and she, as others, recommended that further study is needed in this field.

III. RECOMMENDED CONSIDERATIONS FOR A HOMEWORK PROGRAM

Many studies on the subject of homework have been based on the "either-or" approach rather than on the improvement approach. Recently, schools and parents have worked together to improve the homework program. From the review of the literature written on this subject, the writer can conclude that parents and most teachers are in agreement that homework, if properly administered, can be of definite value to learning in the elementary schools as well as in secondary schools.

Reasons favoring homework. Jameison gives the following reasons developed by a parent-teacher association group on the use of homework. They are: (1) the amount of material the administration requires to be taught cannot be done in the school hours alone; (2) homework acts as a check to see whether the child has grasped the material presented in the class discussion; (3) proper homework gives the child some training and incentive to take responsibility to think for himself; (4) teachers feel that creative work should be done in a freer atmosphere where time is not a pressure; and (5) some teachers believe that drill is a necessity in subjects such as arithmetic and rules of grammar (5:50).

Other reasons favoring homework are: (1) homework tends to bring the parent in closer touch with the schools, and if properly used, becomes an excellent school-community relations medium; (2) the child learns to study independently; and (3) homework helps to keep the child out of mischief (4:16-41).

Arguments against homework. The arguments against homework are: (1) homework takes up too much of the child's afterschool time, and many authorities feel that children should be out in the sun playing instead of indoors studying; (2) adequate study conditions are not always available to the child for studying; (3) many parents do the homework for the children; (4) homework develops emotional tension in children; and (5) homework is sometimes used as punishment (4:16-41).

Most of the arguments have been against the formal type of homework. Many people feel that this type of homework serves no real purpose except to shield poor teaching methods (2:40-41).

Things to consider in planning the homework program. Some current authors believe that an effective homework program must be one that is planned both by the parent and the teacher. In this planning, the parent and the teacher must agree upon the amount and type of help the parent is

to give the child. The homework assignment must be clearly explained to the class, and the type of assignment given must help the pupil to form good study habits (5:128-29).

Daly states that three fundamental questions should influence the kind and amount of homework assigned. They are: (1) what is the physical, mental, and emotional equipment of the child? (2) what may be expected in the way of parental cooperation? and (3) how thoroughly are the technique and art of the definitely planned assignment understood by the teacher and the parent (2:40-41)?

Daly further states that the teacher should investigate the pupil's home to see if it is equipped for planned homework. This investigation should concern the availability of newspapers, magazines, books, encyclopedias, study space, and extra activities of the child. In planning the homework, the teacher should know much about the child (his likes, dislikes, strengths, weaknesses) and build the homework program around this information (2:40-41).

One point on which every author agrees is that homework should never be used as punishment or as a disciplinary measure. Furthermore, homework assignments must be checked and evaluated by the teacher.

Kaufman states that homework is worthwhile when assigned under proper conditions. He feels that homework

should aim to (1) supplement and extend the school program--enrich the out-of-school time; (2) reinforce the classroom learnings; (3) supplement individual interest; (4) develop appreciation and skills; (5) strengthen hobbies; and (6) help to develop self-reliance in work skills and study habits (6:388).

Different authors disagree on the question of parental help with homework. Most authors agree that while parents should not do the homework for the child, they should see to it that the child has an environment conducive to study. They believe that the parents and teachers should work this out between themselves so that they will develop the maximum abilities in the child (6:388).

Many authors believe that homework must make allowances for individual differences. The formalized type of homework in which everyone gets the same assignment is no longer acceptable. The homework must be within the child's ability. In many instances, teachers who give too difficult and too much homework will find that the child will be hurt by this practice.

It is also believed that homework should not be assigned when it does not benefit the child. Many suggest that the amount of homework in the intermediate grades should not exceed thirty minutes. This, however, is a

question which should be decided between the parents and the teachers because of the different leisure time activities in different homes and communities.

Perkins offers six suggestions to teachers for the improvement of their homework program. He suggests that (1) assignments must be given during a time when children can give their full attention to writing them down and clarifying any questions that may arise on the assignment; (2) the assigned material must be something that has been fully explained in class; (3) the teacher should explain to the pupils the purpose of the assignment and set up standards for accomplishment ahead of time; (4) the assignments must be of reasonable length and difficulty; (5) in skill subjects children must have preliminary practice under the teacher's supervision; and (6) the children should be encouraged to appraise their homework in terms of achieving planned objectives (10:478).

CHAPTER III

EVALUATION OF QUESTIONNAIRES

I. ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRES TO TEACHERS

Questionnaires on homework practices were distributed to 75 teachers of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in Bremerton, Washington. Sixty-six questionnaires were returned. However, 2 came back unanswered, leaving a total of 64 responses which could be tallied, resulting in an 85.3 per cent return by teachers. A copy of the questionnaire may be found in Appendix A.

Table I shows the number and percentage of teachers' responses to the question: "Do you assign homework as defined?" It shows that 2 teachers, or 3.1 per cent of the respondents, always assigned homework, and 54, or 84.4 per cent, occasionally assigned, while 8, or 12.5 per cent, never assigned homework. These results indicate that a total of 56, or 87.5 per cent of the respondents, assigned homework always or occasionally.

Of the 8 negative responses indicated in Table I, however, 5 stated definitely that they never assigned homework, but the remaining 3 qualified their responses by stating that they required or allowed "unfinished" class work to be done at home. It is believed that if

TABLE I
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO THE
QUESTION: "DO YOU ASSIGN HOMEWORK AS DEFINED?"

	Number	Percentage
Always	2	3.1%
Occasionally	54	84.4
Never	<u>8</u>	<u>12.5</u>
TOTAL	64	100.0%

the definition of the term homework as stated on page 5 had been fully explained to respondents to include unfinished school work as homework, the 3 respondents may have given a positive response to the question.

Table II is a tabulation of the personal and professional data of teacher respondents according to whether or not they assigned homework. The outcome of the percentage scores does not indicate any major significance as to the sex, age, marital status, training, and professional practices of the respondents. It should be cautioned that the percentage scores be read in relation to the frequency of the responses, inasmuch as a low frequency of response yields a misleading percentage score.

It should also be noted that some respondents did not answer every question. For example, in Item 1 under "Personal Data," which elicited the sex of the respondent, 19 teachers indicated they were male and 41 indicated they were female, accounting for 60 of the respondents. Four respondents did not state their sex. The percentages used were based on the number that actually answered the respective questions.

All 19 of the men teachers and 33 women teachers, or 80.5 per cent of the female respondents, indicated in Item 1 that they assigned homework, while 8, or

TABLE II
COMPARISON OF TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION:
"DO YOU ASSIGN HOMEWORK AS DEFINED?"

		Assign		Never Assign		TOTAL NUMBER
		No.	%	No.	%	
PERSONAL DATA						
1.	Sex					
	Male.....	19	100.0%	-	-	19
	Female.....	33	80.5	8	19.5%	41
2.	Age					
	21-30.....	12	100.0	-	-	12
	31-40.....	15	88.2	2	11.8	17
	41-50.....	13	81.3	3	18.7	16
	51-65.....	14	82.4	3	17.6	17
3.	Marital Status					
	Single.....	10	76.9	3	23.1	13
	Married.....	39	92.9	3	7.1	42
	Divorced.....	5	83.3	1	16.7	6
	Widowed.....	1	50.0	1	50.0	2
*4.	No. of Children					
5.	Degree Held					
	Less than B.A..	1	100.0	-	-	1
	Bachelor's.....	49	87.5	7	12.5	56
	Master's.....	5	100.0	-	-	5
*6.	College Major					
*7.	College Minors					
8.	Teaching Cert.					
	3-Year Elem....	2	66.7	1	33.3	3
	6-Year Elem....	19	79.2	5	20.8	24
	Stand. Elem....	4	100.0	-	-	4
	Life Diploma...	5	100.0	-	-	5
	Prov. Gen.....	12	92.3	1	7.7	13
	Stand. Gen.....	14	100.0	-	-	14

*See text for explanation.

TABLE II (Continued)

		Assign		Never Assign		TOTAL
		No.	%	No.	%	NUMBER
9.	Institution					
	U. of W.....	9	82.0%	2	18.0%	11
	C.W.C.E.....	8	100.0	-	-	8
	E.W.C.E.....	2	50.0	2	50.0	4
	W.W.C.E.....	19	91.0	2	9.0	21
	Other (in-state)	6	100.0	-	-	6
	Out-of-state...	11	85.0	2	15.0	13
PROFESSIONAL DATA						
1.	Grade Teaching					
	4th.....	15	75.0	5	25.0	20
	5th.....	17	85.0	3	15.0	20
	5th-6th.....	1	100.0	-	-	1
	6th.....	22	100.0	-	-	22
2.	Years Teaching Experience					
	1-5.....	14	93.0	1	7.0	15
	6-10.....	15	94.0	1	6.0	16
	11-20.....	15	83.0	3	17.0	18
	21-30.....	12	80.0	3	20.0	15
*3.	Class Enrollment					
*4.	Remedial Readers					
*5.	Socio-Economic Status of Class					
*6.	Intelligence Profile					
7.	Believe Teacher a Professional Person?					
	Yes.....	47	85.5	8	14.5	55
	No.....	5	100.0	-	-	5
	Undecided.....	4	100.0	-	-	4

*See text for explanation.

TABLE II (Continued)

	Assign		Never Assign		TOTAL NUMBER
	No.	%	No.	%	
8. Support P.T.A.?					
Yes.....	44	88.0%	6	12.0	50
No.....	8	80.0	2	20.0	10
Undecided.....	4	100.0	-	-	4
9. Satisfied with Teaching?					
Yes.....	49	85.8	8	14.2	57
No.....	6	100.0	-	-	6
Undecided.....	1	100.0	-	-	1
10. Teaching Method					
Democratic.....	11	73.3	4	26.7	15
Semi-Democratic	36	90.0	4	10.0	40
Authoritarian..	4	100.0	-	-	4
11. Encourage Parent Conferences?					
Always.....	27	81.8	6	18.2	33
Never.....	1	100.0	-	-	1
Occasionally...	27	93.1	2	6.9	29

19.5 per cent of the remaining female respondents, indicated they never assigned homework.

Item 2 revealed that all respondents in the 21 to 30 age group assigned homework, and an almost equally high percentage of those in the other age groups also assigned homework. The percentage scores suggest that the age of the teacher is not a significant factor in determining whether or not a teacher assigned homework.

Although the frequency of responses was low in the other categories, Item 3 seemed to indicate that a higher percentage of married respondents assigned homework than did those who were single, divorced, or widowed.

Item 4 was discarded during the tally because of its ambiguity, as determined by the responses received. It should have specifically called for the number of children of school age instead of just the number of children the teachers have. Some respondents circled the numbers, thinking these were ages or grades of children.

Item 5 elicited the level of degrees earned by respondents, the majority of whom had bachelor's degrees.

There was no predominant college major or minor in the answers to Items 6 and 7.

Item 8 revealed that the majority of the respondents held Six-Year Elementary Teaching Certificates. Of the 24 respondents in this group, 19, or 79.2 per cent,

assigned homework, while 5, or 20.8 per cent, did not. In the next highest group, those who held the Standard General Certificate, all 14 indicated they assigned homework. Out of 13 who held the Provisional General Certificate, 12, or 92.3 per cent, said they assigned homework, while 1, or 7.7 per cent, did not. All of the respondents holding the Standard Elementary Certificate and the Life Diploma, numbering 4 and 5, respectively, assigned homework. There seemed to be hint of a trend for those holding Washington Provisional and Standard General Certificates to make greater use of homework assignments.

Item 9 gave the institution from which respondents were granted their teaching certificates. The greatest number received their certificates from Western Washington College of Education, and of this number, 19, or 91 per cent, assigned homework, and 2, or 9 per cent, did not. No difference was noted between college or university training and the use of homework. More seemed to be attributable to specific institutions rather than type.

Item 1 under "Professional Data" indicated that the higher the pupils' grade, the greater the percentage of teachers who assigned homework. The tally revealed that 75 per cent of those who taught in the fourth grade assigned homework as against 25 per cent who did not; 85 per cent of those who taught in the fifth grade as

against 15 per cent who did not; and 100 per cent of those who taught in the sixth grade assigned homework.

A review of the number of years teaching experience, according to the percentage scores found in Item 2, seemed to show that the practice of homework declined as a teacher gathered teaching experience. Ninety-three per cent of those with 1 to 5 years experience, 94 per cent of those with 6 to 10 years experience, 83 per cent of those with 11 to 20 years experience, and 80 per cent of those with 21 to 30 years experience assigned homework. This trend is interesting in light of criticism that modern education is too lax.

Items 3 and 4 showed no significant trend. It was found that the size of the classes ranged from 22 to 38 for those who assigned homework, and from 24 to 33 for those who did not assign homework. Item 4 revealed that remedial readers numbered from 5 to 15 per class for those who assigned homework, and from 3 to 8 for those who did not assign homework.

In answer to Item 5, all 64 respondents indicated that the families of the majority of the pupils in their class belonged to the middle socio-economic group. A wider range of categories may be needed to make this variable more meaningful.

Item 6 was discarded because it was learned that different schools used different tests to describe the intelligence profile of pupils. It was not possible to validly compare the answers since the question did not call for the type of test given.

In answer to Item 7, which asked whether or not they believed a teacher is a professional person, all but 9 of the respondents answered yes. Five replied no and 4 replied they were undecided. Of this small number, however, the trend seemed to be a belief in homework.

Item 8 revealed that of the 50 respondents who actively supported the P.T.A., 44, or 88 per cent, assigned homework, and 6, or 12 per cent, did not. Of those who did not participate actively, 8, or 80 per cent, assigned homework, and 2, or 20 per cent, did not assign. All 4 who replied they were undecided assigned homework. P.T.A. participation did not seem to indicate any trend in homework practices.

Among the total respondents, 57, or 89 per cent, said in Item 9 that they were satisfied with teaching as their career; 6, or 9.4 per cent, indicated they were not satisfied; and 1, or 1.6 per cent, was undecided. All of those answering that they were dissatisfied or undecided assigned homework. This might leave room for speculation

about the many types of motivation back of teachers' homework assignments.

To gain further information on teacher satisfaction with career, suggestions for improvement were elicited. Because it was impractical to tabulate all the answers, listed below are some of the suggestions respondents offered on how they felt teaching conditions could be improved:

1. Divide or compose rooms according to ability.
2. Do not have more than 20 pupils in split grades and not more than 25 in a straight grade.
Special attention cannot be given on allotted time when classes are so large.
3. Set higher scholastic requirement at all grade levels.
4. Provide more continuity in the curriculum within and between schools.
5. Add languages to curriculum of able students.
6. Increase authority of teachers to discipline.
7. Provide better pay with cost-of-living allowance at the very least.
8. Provide secretarial help.

Item 10 asked, "Which of the following methods best describes your teaching?" Of those who answered democratic, 11, or 73.3 per cent, assigned homework, and 4, or

26.7 per cent, did not assign. Among the majority who answered semi-democratic, 36, or 90 per cent, assigned homework, and 4, or 10 per cent, did not assign. All 4 who answered authoritarian also assigned homework. Because of inquiries as to the definition of these terms, there is doubt that any trend could be determined.

Almost all respondents said, in reply to Item 11, that they encouraged parent conferences and visitations. One respondent, however, said he never encouraged it. To some extent, the less parent-teacher conference oriented, the greater the trend seemed to be for the assigning of homework.

Table III shows the number and percentage of teachers' responses to the question: "If you believe in assigning homework . . . in what grade do you feel homework should be first assigned?" Out of the 49 responses received from those who assigned homework, 21, or 42.9 per cent, answered in favor of the fourth grade. Third grade followed with 24.5 per cent, while the fifth and sixth grades each had 10.2 per cent.

It should be noted that while Table III shows the results of only the respondents who assigned homework, 2 of the 8 respondents who never assigned homework stated they favored homework to begin in the sixth grade, and 2 in the seventh grade.

TABLE III
TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO THE GRADE THEY FEEL
HOMEWORK SHOULD BE FIRST ASSIGNED

	Number	Percentage
Grade 1	2	4.1%
2	2	4.1
3	12	24.5
4	21	42.9
5	5	10.2
6	5	10.2
7	-	-
8	1	2.0
Junior-senior high school	<u>1</u>	<u>2.0</u>
TOTAL	49	100.0%

Table IV presents the number and percentage of teachers' responses to the question: "If you believe in assigning homework . . . how many hours of homework should a child of the fourth grade be assigned per night?" It also gives responses to the same question which was posed for the fifth and sixth grades.

Of the 42 responses to homework for fourth graders, 50 per cent favored less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hour, followed closely by 42.9 per cent who favored $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour. Out of 41 responses, 58.5 per cent favored $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour of homework for fifth graders. Out of 45 responses, 53.3 per cent favored $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour of homework for sixth graders. Thus, homework assignments of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hour for the fourth grade and $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour for the fifth and sixth grades seemed preferred. Of course, in agreement with comments elicited by the question, individual differences must be considered.

Among the 56 respondents who assigned homework, the justifications for assigning homework and the frequency in which they appeared were as follows:

<u>Justification</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
a. Not enough hours in the day to teach everything required	23
b. Need for drill	36
c. Need for development of responsibility .	29

TABLE IV
TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO THE AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK
THEY FEEL CHILDREN SHOULD BE ASSIGNED
IN GRADES 4, 5, AND 6

	Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than ½ hour	21	50.0%	10	24.4%	5	11.1%
½ to 1 hour	18	42.9	24	58.5	24	53.3
1 to 1½ hours	3	7.1	6	14.6	13	28.9
1½ to 2 hours	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2.5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6.7</u>
TOTAL	42	100.0%	41	100.0%	45	100.0%

Some of the other justifications listed were as follows: gives parents insight of child's capabilities; develops interest in subjects; familiarizes parents with school work of child; gives absent or slower pupils time to catch up; there is a lack of resources in school; parents demand homework; class interruptions take up too much time; fosters parent-child relations; children need special help; and furthers research and knowledge.

As previously mentioned on page 20, 3 respondents said they never assigned homework as defined but did require or allow unfinished school work to be done at home. Among these, the justifications listed were:

<u>Justification</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
a. Not enough hours in the day to teach everything required	1
b. Need for drill	3
c. Need for development of responsibility .	1

Respondents who never assigned homework circled the following justifications for not assigning homework:

<u>Justification</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
a. Too much work	2
b. Homework does not foster learning . . .	1
c. Conflicts with parents	3

Other justifications listed were: they prefer assignments to be done in class under the teacher's

guidance; pupils can learn enough during school hours and should be free after school for rest and exercise; and homework frequently encourages pupils to use school time unwisely.

One respondent stated that she occasionally encouraged reading, drill, or special reports but did not assign such. Another did " . . . not believe in homework unless there was a need for more practice, or to do extra research on a problem or to develop some area of interest."

Arithmetic was revealed to be the most frequently assigned subject, with 43 of the teachers assigning it. Social studies followed next with 31; spelling, 26; reading, 19; science, 19; English, 16; health, 9; and penmanship, 4. Four respondents said the homework subjects varied, and 2 indicated incompleting class work as homework.

Teachers tended to assign homework more frequently in the first half of the week, as evidenced by the following results: Monday, 22; Tuesday, 25; Wednesday, 24; Thursday, 22; Friday, 12; and weekend, 8. Six said the days they assigned homework varied.

The question concerning how much homework they assigned revealed that 19, or 44 per cent, assigned $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour of homework per night. Fifteen, or 35 per cent, assigned less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hour; and 5, or 12 per cent, assigned

1 to 1½ hours. Three said the hours depended on the child, and one said the amount varied. The responses to this question showed that the amount actually assigned closely followed the amount they thought should be assigned.

Of the 56 respondents who assigned homework, 11, or 24 per cent, answered that they always individualized homework assignments; 2, or 4 per cent, never; and 32, or 70 per cent, occasionally. One respondent said the pupils individualized themselves, that the bright ones finished their work in school.

Thirty-three, or 75 per cent, of the teachers allowed pupils to do some homework in their spare time; 2, or 5 per cent, never; and 8, or 18 per cent, occasionally. One answered, "Yes, if they insist."

Only one respondent said pupils were never given time to copy down the assignments; 43, always; and 2, occasionally--or 2 per cent, 94 per cent, and 4 per cent, respectively.

Forty-six, or 94 per cent of those answering, said they always explained the homework assignment beforehand; and 3, or 6 per cent, said they explained occasionally. No respondent stated he never explained the work.

After reevaluation of the previous two questions, it was not surprising to find the high percentage of positive responses, since teachers may have been ego

involved and believed these to be desirable practices, whether they actually carried them out or not.

On the question of whether or not teachers checked the homework after it was turned in, 42, or 81 per cent, answered that they always checked the work, while 10, or 19 per cent, said they did occasionally. There was no negative answer to this question.

Homework was never used as a method of punishment by 44, or 83 per cent, of the respondents who assigned homework, but 9, or 17 per cent, admitted they occasionally did use homework as punishment.

Forty-eight, or 96 per cent, answered yes to the question of whether they explained to their pupils why they were given homework. Only one, or 2 per cent, answered no. One respondent replied simply "self evident."

In reply to whether they explained to parents why and how often their children were assigned homework, the following answers were revealed: yes, 37, or 79 per cent; no, 10, or 21 per cent.

Among the teachers who assigned homework, 17, or 37 per cent, always used the grades earned in homework in evaluating the pupil; 12, or 26 per cent, never used the grades; and 17, or 37 per cent, occasionally used them.

A major percentage of the total respondents, 53, or 85.1 per cent, indicated that all the results of learning could not be measured by standardized achievement tests. Five, or 8 per cent, answered in the affirmative, while 4, or 6 per cent, were undecided as to whether all the results of learning could be measured by standardized achievement tests.

Respondents answering negatively generally agreed that no standardized test could measure all the learning situations in the classroom. They stated that standardized tests fail to measure attitudes, social understanding, behavior, interests, and so forth. They also mentioned that there are too many variations in tests, and no test measures accurately all the time. There was further mention that the conditions under which the tests are administered must be taken into consideration, such as the child's health and emotional factors, outside disturbances, and so forth.

Twenty-nine, or 59 per cent of the respondents, stated they had never experienced any conflict with parents. Supporting the contention that homework is a problem of school-public relations is the finding that 20, or 41 per cent, occasionally had experienced such conflicts. The bases of these conflicts were: some parents believed children needed more work, while others

said children had too much homework; children did not understand the assignment; parents did not approve of homework; there were too many afterschool activities and no time for homework; study conditions were poor at home; and there was indifference and lack of understanding by parents.

Among the respondents who never assigned homework, 3 said they had never experienced any conflict with parents on the assignment of homework. Two answered they had occasionally experienced conflict, stating the following reasons: parents complained that their children were bringing home "unfinished" class work; and parents felt their children were given too much homework when actually the children were slow and used class time unwisely.

The results of this questionnaire tend to indicate that current practices in homework assignments are generally in agreement with recommendations as expressed by current authors favoring homework. However, the findings show that problems such as using of homework as punishment, assigning more or less homework than parents feel is justified, and inconsistencies in the use of homework in entering into the determination of grades are specific areas in which further studies should be done locally.

II. ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE TO PARENTS

A total of 2,287 questionnaires concerning homework practices was sent to parents. This entailed one questionnaire for each child of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Parents with more than one child in these grades were asked to fill out a questionnaire for each child. A copy of the questionnaire may be found in Appendix B.

Of the 1,767 questionnaires returned, 51 were disqualified because the questionnaires were not filled out adequately for analysis. This left a total of 1,716 responses which could be tallied, resulting in a 75 per cent return from parents. This number is surprisingly large and may further support the contention that the problem is of interest and importance to parents.

Table V shows the number and percentage of parents' responses to the question: "Do you approve of your child being assigned homework?" It can be seen that a large percentage of respondents, 85 per cent, approved of their children being assigned homework, whereas 7.6 per cent were against the practice, and 6.1 per cent, undecided. Among the number of respondents counted as being undecided were 8 who marked "yes and no." In 3 of the cases where both parents answered the questionnaires jointly, the parents were in disagreement with each other; that is,

TABLE V
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS' RESPONSES
TO THE QUESTION: "DO YOU APPROVE OF YOUR
CHILD BEING ASSIGNED HOMEWORK?"

	Number	Percentage
Yes	1,459	85.0%
No	130	7.6
Undecided	105	6.1
Unanswered	<u>22</u>	<u>1.3</u>
TOTAL	1,716	100.0%

one parent said yes and the other said no. The other 5 respondents stated they approved of homework if the children were slow or behind in their studies.

Different respondents who approved of homework gave various reasons for wanting homework. They said homework (1) develops initiative and responsibility; (2) requires independent study; (3) instills self-discipline; (4) helps develop good study habits; (5) helps parents understand the kind of work the child is doing and his progress in school; (6) prepares the child for upper grades when more homework will be assigned; (7) teaches the child to budget time; (8) helps the child who is slow in school; (9) teaches the child to follow directions; (10) offers a chance to review what has been learned and acts as a supplement to class work; (11) ties the home with the school; (12) teaches the child to use reference books; and (13) keeps the child busy and out of mischief.

Another reason given by many parents was that classes were too large and there were not enough hours in the school day for the child to absorb enough learning without using homework.

Contrary to the above reasoning, respondents who did not approve of homework remarked: (1) with proper instruction and planning, school hours should be sufficient for studying; (2) the child should complete his school

work under the teacher's supervision and guidance; (3) the child depends too much on parents to do the work; (4) grade school is too early to have homework; (5) homework interferes with family life and the child's recreation; (6) there is not enough time in the evenings for chores and outside play when homework is assigned; and (7) the child gets upset when he has to do homework.

Some of the respondents who were undecided said their children have had very little or no homework. Others said there was too much at times, and that children should have homework occasionally but not so much that they have no time for anything else.

A few of the parents, 1.3 per cent, did not take any stand concerning homework and left the question unanswered. Out of this small percentage, some had inadvertently skipped the entire page. However, the rest of the answers in those questionnaires were tallied as it was felt they would contribute to the overall study.

Table VI is a tabulation of parents' personal data in relation to whether or not they approved of their children being assigned homework.

As noted in the previous section which discussed the results of teachers' responses, some parents also did not answer every question. For example, as shown in Item 1 of Table VI, 973 questionnaires were answered by mothers,

TABLE VI

COMPARISON OF PARENTS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION:
 "DO YOU APPROVE OF YOUR CHILD
 BEING ASSIGNED HOMEWORK?"

	Yes		No		Undecided		Unanswered		TOTAL NUMBER
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
1. Person answering									
Mother.....	813	83.6%	81	8.3%	67	6.9%	12	1.2%	973
Father.....	126	87.5	14	9.7	4	2.8	-	-	144
Both parents.....	439	88.5	29	5.9	25	5.0	3	.6	496
Other.....	11	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
2. Age of Father									
21-30.....	32	78.1	1	2.4	7	17.1	1	2.4	41
31-40.....	788	86.0	61	6.7	57	6.2	10	1.1	916
41-50.....	471	84.9	44	7.9	33	5.9	7	1.3	555
51-65.....	96	85.7	11	9.8	4	3.6	1	.9	112
3. Age of Mother									
21-30.....	140	89.8	6	3.8	10	6.4	-	-	156
31-40.....	926	84.6	85	7.8	68	6.2	15	1.4	1094
41-50.....	334	84.8	31	7.9	23	5.8	6	1.5	394
51-65.....	33	86.8	3	7.9	2	5.3	-	-	38
4. Marital Status									
Married.....	1301	84.8	115	7.5	99	6.5	19	1.2	1534
Divorced.....	82	92.1	3	3.4	3	3.4	1	1.1	89
Widowed.....	31	91.2	3	8.8	-	-	-	-	34
Separated.....	12	60.0	5	25.0	2	10.0	1	5.0	20

TABLE VI (Continued)

	Yes		No		Undecided		Unanswered		TOTAL NUMBER
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
5. Number of Children in School									
1.....	203	84.2%	20	8.3%	11	4.6%	7	2.9%	241
2.....	565	85.0	53	8.0	42	6.3	5	.7	665
3.....	449	85.5	38	7.3	31	5.9	7	1.3	525
4.....	152	84.9	13	7.3	12	6.7	2	1.1	179
5.....	44	83.0	3	5.7	6	11.3	-	-	53
6.....	18	94.7	-	-	1	5.3	-	-	19
7.....	3	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
8.....	1	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
9.....	-	-	3	100.0	-	-	-	-	3
6. Father's Education									
Less than high school.....	250	85.3	17	5.8	24	8.2	2	.7	293
10th grade.....	110	84.0	11	8.4	8	6.1	2	1.5	131
11th grade.....	80	85.1	4	4.3	9	9.6	1	1.0	94
12th grade.....	973	85.6	90	7.9	59	5.2	15	1.3	1137
Attended college.	396	89.0	29	6.5	15	3.4	5	1.1	445
Degrees earned:									
Bachelor's.....	84	84.9	9	9.1	4	4.0	2	2.0	99
Master's.....	19	73.0	7	27.0	-	-	-	-	26
Doctor's.....	29	87.9	3	9.1	-	-	1	3.0	33

TABLE VI (Continued)

	Yes		No		Undecided		Unanswered		TOTAL NUMBER
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
7. Mother's Education									
Less than high school.....	134	83.3%	6	3.7%	20	12.4%	1	.6%	161
10th grade.....	116	89.2	9	7.0	5	3.8	-	-	130
11th grade.....	110	85.3	13	10.0	5	3.9	1	1.8	129
12th grade.....	1084	85.4	93	7.3	74	5.9	18	1.4	1269
Attended college.	380	86.8	37	8.4	18	4.1	3	.7	438
Degrees earned:									
Bachelor's.....	80	88.9	8	8.9	1	1.1	1	1.1	90
Master's.....	1	33.3	2	66.7	-	-	-	-	3
8. Father's Occupation									
Administrative or Supervisory....	80	83.3	9	9.4	5	5.2	2	2.1	96
Armed Services...	108	90.0	3	2.5	8	6.7	1	.8	120
Business.....	60	83.3	10	13.9	-	-	2	2.8	72
Clerical.....	22	88.0	-	-	2	8.0	1	4.0	25
Farming.....	4	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Laboring.....	206	86.6	11	4.6	19	8.0	2	.8	238
Pilot.....	1	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Professional.....	163	89.1	9	4.9	8	4.4	3	1.6	183
Public Service...	35	76.1	8	17.4	3	6.5	-	-	46
Retired.....	14	93.3	-	-	-	-	1	6.7	15
Sales.....	56	88.8	4	6.4	3	4.8	-	-	63
Student.....	1	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Trade.....	619	83.3	67	9.0	48	6.5	9	1.2	743
Unemployed.....	5	83.3	-	-	1	16.7	-	-	6

TABLE VI (Continued)

	Yes		No		Undecided		Unanswered		TOTAL NUMBER
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
9. Mother's Occupation									
Administrative or Supervisory....	10	77.0%	1	7.6%	2	15.4%	-	-	13
Business.....	15	88.2	2	11.8	-	-	-	-	17
Clerical.....	156	81.3	21	10.9	11	5.7	4	2.1%	192
Homemaker.....	1111	86.3	82	6.3	79	6.1	17	1.3	1289
Laboring.....	24	92.3	-	-	1	3.9	1	3.9	26
Professional.....	60	85.7	9	12.9	1	1.4	-	-	70
Public Service...	6	54.5	5	45.6	-	-	-	-	11
Sales.....	32	86.5	3	6.1	2	5.4	-	-	37
Trade.....	40	87.0	3	6.5	3	6.5	-	-	46
10. Family Income									
Less than \$2500..	41	82.0	4	8.0	4	8.0	1	2.0	50
\$2501-\$4000.....	98	86.7	5	4.4	9	8.0	1	.9	113
\$4001-\$5000.....	197	87.2	14	6.2	12	5.3	3	1.3	226
\$5001-\$6000.....	403	83.6	40	8.3	31	6.4	8	1.7	482
\$6001-\$7000.....	263	87.0	22	7.3	15	5.0	2	.7	302
Over \$7000.....	385	83.3	42	9.1	29	6.3	6	1.3	462
11. Racial Ancestry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12. Church Preference									
Catholic.....	165	88.6	13	7.1	8	4.3	-	-	186
Protestant.....	1199	85.0	106	7.5	86	6.1	20	1.4	1411
Catholic-Jewish..	1	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Catholic-Protes- tant.....	7	87.5	-	-	1	12.5	-	-	8

TABLE VI (Continued)

		Yes		No		Undecided		Unanswered		TOTAL NUMBER
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
13.	Grade of Child									
	4th grade.....	429	83.1%	48	9.3%	32	6.2%	7	1.4%	516
	5th grade.....	459	84.4	44	8.1	36	6.6	5	.9	544
	6th grade.....	564	87.3	37	5.7	36	5.6	9	1.4	646
14.	P.T.A. Membership									
	Yes.....	1072	86.9	85	6.9	70	5.7	6	.5	1233
	No.....	360	82.2	45	10.3	31	7.0	2	.5	438
15.	Attendance at P.T.A. Meetings									
	Always.....	250	89.3	20	7.2	10	3.5	-	-	280
	Never.....	132	84.6	16	10.3	7	4.5	1	.6	156
	Occasionally...	1042	84.9	92	7.5	87	7.0	7	.6	1228

144 by fathers, 469 by both parents, and 11 by other members of the family such as aunt or grandmother. It could not be determined which parent answered the remaining 92 questionnaires. The percentages used in computing the responses were based on the number that actually answered the respective questions.

Item 1 also shows that the sex of the parent who responded was not an important variable in the response to the question since it can be seen that more than 87 per cent of fathers and more than 83 per cent of mothers approved of their children being assigned homework. These results show that there was an overwhelming parental attitude favoring the assignment of homework.

Items 2 and 3 show the comparison of responses according to the age groups of fathers and mothers, respectively. There was a notable difference in the youngest age group of the fathers in that a greater percentage of the responses that were undecided fell in the 21 to 30 age group. The least definite opinion was in this group of fathers and is supported further in that they had the lowest percentages of responses in favor of and against homework.

There was a notable difference in the percentage of responses made by parents who were separated and by parents who were married, divorced, or widowed. The

figures in Item 4 revealed that 25 per cent of the parents who were separated did not approve of homework, as compared to 7.5 per cent, 3.4 per cent, and 8.8 per cent who were married, divorced, and widowed, respectively. One can only speculate about why there is the high percentage of opposition to homework by the separated group. However, with unsettled problems, there would likely be greater difficulty in supervising homework and possibly more reason for disagreement simply because of unresolved problems in a different sphere.

Item 5 compares the responses made by parents with the number of children they had attending school. No significant difference was noted, whether there was one to five children, but for families with six, seven, or eight children it was surprising that there was an increase in the percentage favoring homework. Three respondents indicated they had nine children of school age. These respondents answered that they were against homework. It seemed obvious that if homework requires individualized supervision, the parents with nine children, each child bringing home assignments, would be opposed to homework.

Item 6 shows the comparison of the father's educational background with the responses made. This could not be analyzed accurately as there was no provision in the question to indicate that the particular response was

made by that parent. For example, a mother may have answered she did not approve of homework, but her response did not necessarily mean that the father with a college or lesser education shared the same view. The mother's educational background, Item 7, also could not be analyzed for the same reason.

Items 8 and 9 present a comparison of parents' occupational fields to the responses. No major differences occurred, but there was some difference in the responses of parents in public service occupations as compared to others in that this group had the lowest percentage favoring homework and the highest percentage against homework.

Item 10 is a comparison of responses according to the family's income range. There seemed to be no significance in the various responses as related to the family's income. The majority of respondents indicated they were in the \$5,001 to \$6,000 income group, and no differences were apparent when comparing this with the highest or lowest income group.

Due to the ambiguity of answers received, Item 11 on racial ancestry had to be discarded. Some stated "American," others "white," and only a few reported their true racial strain.

Item 12 compares the parents' responses in relation to their church preference. There was no significant difference in the attitudes toward homework of parents of the Catholic and Protestant faiths.

A minor trend in positive and negative responses was evidenced by Item 13. It may be noted that as the grades went up from the fourth to the fifth and sixth grades, so did the responses favoring homework in the following order: fourth grade, 83.1 per cent; fifth grade, 84.4 per cent; and sixth grade, 87.3 per cent. Inversely, the percentage of responses against homework was greatest in the fourth grade with 9.3 per cent, while the fifth grade had 8.1 per cent, and the sixth grade, 5.7 per cent.

Items 14 and 15 compare the responses of parents on P.T.A. membership and their attendance of meetings. Although the difference was slight, it may be noted that a greater percentage of negative responses was made by non-members than by members.

Table VII shows the parents' responses to the grade in which they felt homework should be first assigned. Most parents, 36 per cent, answered in favor of the fourth grade. Third grade came next with 26.7 per cent, and the first grade followed with 11.7 per cent. Fifth, second,

TABLE VII
PARENTS' RESPONSES TO THE GRADE THEY FEEL
HOMEWORK SHOULD BE FIRST ASSIGNED

	Number	Percentage
Grade 1	165	11.7%
2	106	7.5
3	377	26.7
4	507	36.0
5	148	10.5
6	74	5.3
7	<u>33</u>	<u>2.3</u>
TOTAL	1,410	100.0%

sixth, and seventh grades trailed with 10.5, 7.5, 5.3, and 2.3 per cent, respectively.

One parent stated he favored homework to start in the eighth grade, another in junior high school, and 3 answered in favor of high school, but these were not included in the table because the percentages were too slight to be of any significance. Some parents did not state any specific grade, but merely commented that "it should depend on the child," "start whenever necessary," "be given if a child is unable to finish the assignment in school," and "necessary only in subjects such as foreign language."

The figures in Table VIII reveal that the majority of respondents believed children in the three grades should have $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour of homework per night. The percentages were as follows: fourth grade, 71 per cent; fifth grade, 69.4 per cent; and sixth grade, 47.7 per cent. This follows closely with the amount favored by teachers.

It may be pointed out that in the fourth grade, the next highest percentage, 24 per cent, was in favor of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. However, in the fifth and sixth grades, the next highest percentages were for 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours with 22.7 per cent and 38.8 per cent, respectively, favoring these amounts.

TABLE VIII
PARENTS' RESPONSES TO THE AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK
THEY FEEL CHILDREN SHOULD BE ASSIGNED
IN GRADES 4, 5, AND 6

	Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than ½ hour	341	24.0%	83	5.6%	25	1.7%
½ to 1 hour	1013	71.0	1031	69.4	706	47.7
1 to 1½ hours	65	4.6	337	22.7	574	38.8
1½ to 2 hours	<u>7</u>	<u>.4</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>2.3</u>	<u>174</u>	<u>11.8</u>
TOTAL	1426	100.0%	1485	100.0%	1479	100.0%

In addition to the responses shown in Table VIII, some parents said they felt the amount should depend on the child, or the amount could be as much as needed. Four respondents stated sixth graders could have as much as three hours of homework, while others said the homework should not be given every night or not on weekends. The use of general and ambiguous statements by parents may tend to indicate a need for cooperative planning in determining needs and ways of meeting these needs.

Many responses revealed data that did not fit tabular presentation but were essential to complete description.

Out of 1,705 responses, 1,541, or 90.4 per cent, indicated their children have had homework; 160, or 9.4 per cent, said they never had homework; and 4, or .3 per cent, indicated they did not know.

Of the 1,541 responses by those parents whose children had homework, 100 indicated they did not approve of homework and 78 were undecided; and of the 160 responses by those whose children did not have homework, 113 said they approved of homework and 21 were undecided.

On the question of whether parents approved of the type of homework their children were currently assigned, 1,247, or 84.2 per cent, answered yes; 125, or 8.4 per cent, answered no; and 109, or 7.4 per cent,

undecided. Despite the concern shown about homework, the majority seemed satisfied with the type of homework given.

Parents reported that arithmetic was the most frequently assigned homework subject for their children. It appeared 1,242 times, followed in order by social studies, 947; spelling, 786; reading, 601; English, 577; science, 505; health, 258; and penmanship, 87. Other subjects mentioned were music, 7; book reports, 3; and art, 1.

Homework was more frequently assigned in the early part of the week, as shown by the following parents' responses as to days of the week on which their children had assignments: Monday, 650; Tuesday, 623; Wednesday, 647; Thursday, 640; Friday, 520; and weekend, 448. Four hundred and one respondents said the days varied.

Of the 1,459 responses to the question on how many hours per night their children spent on homework, the greatest percentage ranged from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour with a total of 709 responses, or 48.6 per cent. Next in order were: less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hour, 345, or 23.7 per cent; 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, 236, or 16.2 per cent; and $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 hours, 107, or 7.3 per cent. Other responses received were: over 2 hours, 26, or 1.8 per cent; variable amounts, 18, or 1.2 per cent; and very little, 18, or 1.2 per cent.

A greater percentage of respondents, 51.7 per cent, or 781 in number, answered that their children did not always understand their homework assignments as compared to the 727, or 48.1 per cent, who stated their children always understood the assignments. Only 3, or .2 per cent, of the respondents said their children never understood their assignments. The number who did not understand assignments was interesting when compared with teacher responses, which indicated that an almost unanimous number claimed they always explained the assignment.

The majority of respondents replied that their youngsters were always given time to write down their assignments. The results were as follows: always, 967, or 70.1 per cent; never, 20, or 1.5 per cent; not always, 392, or 28.4 per cent. Again a difference was noted between parents' responses concerning their children's perception of what occurs and what teachers reported to be their practice.

Many of the pupils were also allowed to do some of their homework in school during study periods, as evidenced by the following figures: always, 636, or 45.5 per cent; never, 35, or 2.5 per cent; occasionally, 728, or 52 per cent.

Only 36, or 2.4 per cent, of the respondents stated they never helped their children with their homework;

while 241, or 15.8 per cent, said they always gave help; and 1,244, or 81.8 per cent, occasionally helped. There was, of course, some problem as to what was meant by occasionally, but these respondents marked the following ways in which they helped their children:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Help with every problem | 10 |
| b. Clarify difficult problems only | 1,255 |
| c. See that the assignment is done | 215 |
| d. Check problems after completion | 746 |

Some of the other ways in which parents said they helped their children were: listen to reading or spelling words; drill in arithmetic; discuss problem or subject; quiz on assignments; give reassurance when child gets upset; encourage use of reference materials and help obtain them; offer suggestions for special reports; and explain new type of work as in arithmetic and English.

While the majority of respondents, 1,272, or 83.3 per cent, felt their children were never assigned homework as punishment, 250, or 16.4 per cent, felt they were occasionally, and 4, or .3 per cent, always.

A total of 1,339 respondents, or 93 per cent, replied their children understood why they were assigned homework, while 105, or 7 per cent, said they did not.

Seventy-seven per cent, or 1,083 respondents, also understood why and how often their children were given

homework, but 23 per cent, or 322 respondents, said they did not. This again suggested a need for improved parent-teacher communication.

On the question of whether or not their children had a quiet study period at home, respondents answered as follows: always, 759, or 50.1 per cent; never, 54, or 3.6 per cent; and occasionally, 702, or 46.3 per cent.

Most of the respondents, 1,580, or 94 per cent, answered that their children had reference books at home, such as dictionary, encyclopedia, or periodicals, but 95, or 6 per cent, answered negatively. This and the previous point suggested that good learning environments are generally found.

A high percentage of parents stated that their children, of their own free will, did more work than required: 115, or 7.2 per cent, always; and 1,054, or 65.8 per cent, occasionally. Twenty-seven per cent, or 434 parents, said their children never did extra work of their own initiative.

Only 83, or 5.3 per cent of 1,555 respondents, said their children never did their homework without being persuaded, while 788, or 50.7 per cent, said their children never needed to be persuaded, and 684, or 44 per cent, said they needed to be persuaded occasionally. Does this suggest approval of homework by at least half of the pupils?

Most respondents, at least occasionally, allowed their children to watch television before they completed their homework. One hundred and ten, or 7.1 per cent, always allowed it, and 1,052, or 68.7 per cent, occasionally; while 370, or 24.2 per cent, never allowed television viewing first. Some respondents remarked that their children did their homework in the morning hours, and television was never a problem. A few said they did not own sets.

Out of 1,660 responses, 384, or 23.1 per cent, stated that their children always did household chores willingly and voluntarily; 1,178, or 71 per cent, said occasionally; while 98, or 5.9 per cent, stated negatively. It was interesting to note that children were at least somewhat more willing to do household chores than homework.

In answer to whether or not they had other children in school who also had homework, 1,159, or 70 per cent, replied yes; and 508, or 30 per cent, replied no.

The responses revealed that club activities consumed a good portion of the afterschool hours for the majority of the children. Participation in youth organizations such as Scouts and Campfire was mentioned 943 times. This was followed by sports, 895; music (instruments and dancing), 587; church activities, 150; news routes and errands, 48; chores, 44; patrol, 16; science class, 13; and

hobbies, 9. Parents of 68 children remarked they did not participate in any afterschool activities.

Three respondents replied that their children spent as much as 5 hours per day on some activities, but the majority reported lesser amounts as follows: less than 1 hour, 31; 1 hour, 609; 2 hours, 550; 3 hours, 128; and 4 hours, 33. Other respondents, numbering 83, did not state any specific number of hours because they said the amount varied. This participation in afterschool activities may present conflicts with homework assignments. This presents an area in which more attention could be given in apportioning the child's time according to the relative value of his activities.

Most of the activities seemed to take place from Monday to Thursday, with Wednesday marked most frequently. The tally revealed the following: Monday, 828; Tuesday, 776; Wednesday, 841; Thursday, 803; Friday, 533; and weekend, 678. A few, 27, said the days varied. It may be recalled that homework was also most frequently assigned on the days on which activity was heaviest.

Although the majority of respondents, 1,092, or 69.4 per cent, said they had no complaints on the amount of homework assigned, almost twice as many parents said there was not enough assigned as compared to those who said there was too much. The tally indicated that 309

respondents, or 19.7 per cent, felt that there was not enough, and only 172 respondents, or 10.9 per cent, too much. Evidently, the majority of the parents did not feel that the occurrence of homework and other activities on the same days was a problem of major importance.

Two of the most frequently voiced complaints against the present homework program were that (1) the child did not always understand the assignment or the method, and got confused when the parents tried to explain it, as their method was different from the teacher's; and (2) on some days there was no homework at all while on other days the child was given too much.

Parents suggested that the teacher should (1) see that the child understands the assignment and give examples if necessary; and (2) have a set program of home study. Many parents said they would prefer a child to have a little homework every night and none on weekends or holidays rather than be overworked on certain days.

Many other different complaints were expressed, the more significant ones being paraphrased as follows: (1) homework should not be given as punishment; (2) not enough emphasis is placed on subjects in which pupils were weak; (3) assignments are not interesting enough; (4) there is too much repetition of arithmetic problems after mastery; (5) there are not enough assignments in

basic subjects such as reading, arithmetic, penmanship, and English; (6) the child is not allowed to bring books home; (7) there is too much work requiring reference material which the child does not understand; (8) children correct and grade the homework papers, sometimes marking a problem wrong when it is correct; (9) the child is capable of doing more work; (10) homework is not mandatory and is not graded and handed back; and (11) six hours in school should be sufficient for study.

The suggestions also varied according to whether or not parents approved of homework. Among responses against homework, the suggestions were: (1) eliminate the homework program entirely; (2) let school work be done in school; (3) never give more work than can be done in school and require it to be done there; (4) allow more supervised study time in school; (5) make a definite deadline for handing in assignments; (6) give homework only to those that need extra work and discuss with parents as to how and when to help; and (7) lengthen school time by one-half hour and give no homework.

Some of the suggestions made by parents who approved of homework were as follows: (1) homework should be practice or review work rather than new work; (2) keep children after school if necessary so they understand their work; (3) keep homework time down to about one hour with

only one or two subjects at a time; (4) post assignments at least a week ahead so child could work ahead; (5) enforce stricter discipline from the first grade on; (6) require more reference work and written reports; (7) make reference books available in school library which could be checked out; (8) assign work only in subjects in which the child is weak; (9) do not use homework as punishment because of the misbehavior of a few; (10) improve reporting medium to show problem areas and rate of progress; (11) improve instructor-parent communication; (12) put studies before sports; (13) make definite assignments even for extra credit; (14) base homework assignments on child's interest instead of daily school subjects; (15) spend more time correcting papers so child knows where the mistake lies; (16) spend more time on basic reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, and English; (17) teach good study habits in school; and (18) assign homework according to child's need for extra help.

The overall tally to the question on whether or not respondents had conferences with the teacher was as follows: yes, 1,292, or 77 per cent; no, 381, or 23 per cent. Apparently this channel of communication between the parent and teacher was used widely. However, how effective this medium has been remains a question.

A great majority of the respondents, 1,254, or 75.8 per cent, replied that they maintained a friendly relationship toward their children's teacher. They attributed this feeling mainly to mutual respect and understanding of the child's needs. Only 16, or 1 per cent, revealed a hostile relationship, and 384, or 23.2 per cent, revealed a neutral relationship. None of these, however, seemed to indicate homework to be a direct cause for unfriendliness, although too much homework was mentioned by one parent for feeling neutral. Parents revealed that most of the hostile and neutral responses were due to personality differences or not knowing the teacher well enough.

The questionnaire also revealed that 1,400, or 85.2 per cent, of the pupils have a friendly relationship toward the teacher; 38, or 2.3 per cent, hostile; and 205, or 12.5 per cent, neutral. Here again, homework was not mentioned as a direct cause for unfriendliness toward the teacher although in two cases the respondents revealed that the children were hostile in the previous year because too much homework was assigned.

The results of the questionnaire to parents tend to indicate that a large majority of parents strongly favored homework. The results indicate, too, that while teachers may believe that they assign one-half hour of homework, each child may finish this as his own ability

permits. Some do it in the one-half hour expected and others may take two or three hours. These results again may show a need for a recommended guide list of considerations for the teacher to use in assigning homework. It may also indicate a need for further investigation of the use of the parent-teacher conference as a valuable adjunct to the assignment of homework.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

I. SUMMARY

Homework was considered by 85 per cent of the parents and 87.5 per cent of the upper elementary grade teachers in Bremerton, Washington, as a valuable part of the educative process. This is similar to other available surveys. Homework brings the home and the school in very close contact. This contact can bring about mutual respect between the home and the school or it can bring about unpleasant relations. The importance that homework plays in school and community relations makes it imperative that any homework assigned be given as part of the educative process. It should not only aim to develop the child to his utmost abilities with due respect and considerations given to his physical, mental, social, and emotional maturity, but also be in keeping with the school's educational objectives.

Studies on the problem of homework were recorded as early as 1904 when a German educator experimented with twelve- and thirteen-year old children and concluded that homework was not beneficial to them. Since then, a few studies have been conducted on the national level in the

United States. At the beginning, the studies were based on the approach of whether or not homework should be assigned. Two of the studies worthy of mention were those conducted by Di Napoli, who experimented with compulsory and voluntary homework, and McGill, who experimented with a no-homework group and a forced-homework group in the area of high school social studies and concluded that, in general, compulsory homework did not add appreciably to school learning. Both of these experiments suggested that further study should be done in this area.

Recently, several studies have been conducted nationally on the improvement of homework. Three studies worthy of mention, discussed in Chapter II, were the studies by Langdon and Stout, by the N.E.A., and by Strang. These studies were based on research of recommended practices by P.T.A. groups and the attitudes of parents and teachers on the values of homework.

Despite studies not showing a definite conclusion on the value of homework, there is still some strong feeling about having homework. Some of the most popular reasons favoring the assignment of homework are: (1) lack of time to teach all the subjects during the school day; (2) homework helps to check whether or not the child has grasped the material presented in class; (3) proper homework develops initiative and responsibility in the child;

(4) homework gives the child a freer atmosphere in which to work; (5) there is necessity for drill in certain subjects; (6) proper homework fosters good school-community relations; (7) child learns good study habits; and (8) the child keeps out of mischief.

On the other hand, since research presents no conclusive evidence of the value of homework, there is also some strong feeling against having homework. Some of the most popular reasons against the assignment of homework are: (1) homework takes up too much of the child's time; (2) adequate study conditions are not always available at home; (3) many parents do the homework for the children; (4) homework develops emotional tension in children; and (5) homework is sometimes used as punishment.

Six important aims of the homework program are listed by Kaufman as: (1) homework should supplement and extend the school program--enrich the out-of-school time; (2) homework should reinforce the classroom learnings; (3) homework should supplement individual interest; (4) homework should develop appreciation and skills; (5) homework should strengthen hobbies; and (6) homework should help to develop self-reliance in work skills and study habits.

Three general considerations of extreme importance in the assignment of homework as expressed by Daly are:

(1) what is the physical, mental, and emotional equipment of the child? (2) what may be expected in parental cooperation? and (3) how thoroughly are the technique and art of the definitely planned assignment understood by the teacher and the parent?

Some more specific guide rules generally agreed upon in planning the assignment of homework are: (1) the homework program should be planned by both the parent and the teacher; (2) the assignment should be clearly explained to the class; (3) the type of homework assigned must foster growth in the child and help him to form good study habits; (4) the home must have an environment conducive to study with quietness and reference books available; (5) the homework assignment must be assigned for the individual child; (6) homework should not be assigned as punishment; (7) homework must be within the child's ability; and (8) the amount of homework must be commensurate with the maturity of the child.

In conducting this study, the writer reviewed all available literature on the problem of homework and distributed questionnaires to all the teachers and parents of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade pupils of the Bremerton, Washington, Public Schools. The returned questionnaires were then analyzed in an item-by-item tabulation.

The results of the questionnaires to teachers and parents revealed the following information:

1. Homework was favored by an overwhelming majority of teachers and parents.
2. Homework was favored by most teachers and parents to start in the fourth grade.
3. Most parents favored from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour of homework a night for all grades, while most teachers favored less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hour for the fourth grade and $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour for grades five and six.
4. Most parents favored the assignment of homework on weekdays and none on holidays and weekends.
5. Most parents were satisfied with the homework program currently practiced by teachers in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in Bremerton, although more parents complained that there was not enough homework assigned than that too much homework was assigned.
6. Two of the most frequently voiced complaints were that (1) the child did not always understand the assignment or the method; and (2) on some days there was no homework and on other days the child was overworked.

7. The opinions and ideas of most parents were similar to those of parents in other communities for which research was reviewed.
8. On the whole, teachers of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of the Bremerton Public Schools were conducting homework practices in line with suggested rules and considerations in the assignment of homework.

II. IMPLICATIONS

The evaluation of current homework practices in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of the Bremerton Public Schools revealed that on the whole, most teachers were engaged in homework practices in accordance with recommended considerations and rules. The questionnaires also revealed that conflict existed between teachers and parents and between pupils and teachers due to homework practices. It was interesting to note that most of these practices were points made in current literature.

Because of the perceived importance of the homework program to the schools, it behooves the schools to orient their teachers to the recommended considerations of assigning homework. Public relations cannot function at a more strategic position than at the person-to-person level which, in the field of the school and community, is the

level of the teacher, pupil, and parent. With homework being one of the dimensions of public relations, it behooves the schools also to orient the teachers as to the pitfalls in the assignment of homework, and to instill a general homework guide policy that would aid teachers in improving their own homework assignments. Such a policy must recognize and respect the individuality of both the teacher and the pupil. In many instances, the individuality of the pupil is considered but the individuality of the teacher and his own teaching methods are overlooked or disregarded. It is believed that in order to be most effective, the policy should function on a democratic philosophy not only at the teacher-pupil level, but also at the administration-teacher-pupil level.

Comments from parents indicated that further specific study on assignment practices should be conducted on the junior and senior high school level. Such a study would be worthwhile and necessary if the schools desire to develop a policy that would consider the total educational value of the homework method of instruction. The policy must be uniform but changing with educational objectives and educational level if it is to be at all effective.

Another important implication that must be mentioned is that research and even popular lay opinion, as

evidenced by the results of the questionnaire, agree that homework should be based on the premise that it is the quality of the assignment and not the quantity that effects the best teaching-learning situation. The writer believes that above all other considerations, this must be the most highly considered. We must, through specific experimental research, find the methods which actually seem to improve pupil performance and limit the practices to these findings.

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APPENDIX A

April 2, 1959

Dear Fellow Teacher:

I am presently engaged in a research project to gather material for use in my master's thesis. The proposed title of my thesis is: "An Evaluation of Current Homework Practices in Grades 4, 5, and 6 of the Bremerton Public Schools." This study is being undertaken with the approval of the Graduate Faculty of Central Washington College of Education and the Superintendent's Office of the Bremerton School District, as well as the Bremerton School Board.

It is hoped that the results of this project may furnish valuable information to teachers, parents, and administrators in fostering:

- 1) Better school-community relationship
- 2) Better teacher-parent relationship
- 3) Better teacher-pupil relationship
- 4) Better parent-child relationship
- 5) Better teacher-teacher relationship
- 6) Better teacher-administrator relationship

Enclosed is a questionnaire covering pertinent data which are needed for the formulation of my study. May I ask your earnest cooperation in giving a few minutes of your time to fill it out as completely and frankly as possible. Also enclosed is a self-addressed envelope so that you may seal your completed questionnaire in the envelope. Please do not write your name. Your questionnaire will not be identified as yours in any way.

In order to get as complete a return as possible, I am asking your help in distributing one set of the "Questionnaire to Parents" with accompanying letter and envelope to each pupil in your class, and collecting the sealed envelopes containing the completed questionnaires afterward. After all the questionnaires have been returned, please turn them all in to your principal, together with the one completed by you, not later than April 15.

Because of the varied definitions of the term "homework," I have taken Webster's definition for the purpose of this

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study. In answering the questionnaire, please keep the following in mind: Homework applies to "any assignment for study or preparation outside the classroom."

The final results of this study will be sent to the Superintendent's Office. These results are not intended to find fault or criticism of any teaching method, but are intended solely for research purposes and evaluation of the problem of homework in this school district.

Thank you for your kind cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ DONALD M. FUJIMOTO
Donald M. Fujimoto
Fifth Grade Teacher
Naval Avenue School

Encls: Questionnaire to Teachers
Self-addressed envelope

QUESTIONNAIRE TO TEACHERS

A. PERSONAL DATA (PLEASE CIRCLE)

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Age: 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-65
3. Marital Status: Single Married Divorced Widowed
 Other (please state): _____
4. Number of your own children: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
5. Degree(s) you now hold: B.A. B.S. B.A.Ed.
 Less than B.A. M.A. M.S. M.Ed. Other: _____
6. College Major: _____
7. College Minors: _____
8. Type of Teaching Certificate you hold:
 Three-Year Elementary Three-Year Secondary
 Provisional General Standard General
 Six-Year Elementary Six-Year Secondary
 Standard Elementary Standard Secondary
 Other: _____
9. Institution that granted your Teaching Certificate:
 U.W. W.S.C. C.W.C.E. E.W.C.E. W.W.C.E.

If other than above, please state name of institution and its location:

B. PROFESSIONAL DATA (PLEASE CIRCLE)

1. Present grade you teach: 4th 5th 6th
2. Number years teaching experience: 1-5 6-10 11-20 21-30
3. Number of pupils in your class: _____
 Number of girls _____ Number of boys _____

4. Number of remedial readers in your class:_____

5. Socio-economic status of the homes of the majority of your pupils:

Lower

Middle

Upper

*6. What is the intelligence profile of your class as measured by standardized intelligence tests? (Please state number)

80 - 95 Slow Learners _____

96 - 110 Average _____

111 - 129 Above Average _____

130 - Above Superior _____

7. Do you believe a teacher is a professional person?

Yes No Undecided

8. Do you actively support the P.T.A.?

Yes No Undecided

9. Are you satisfied with teaching as your career?

Yes No Undecided

If answer is no, how can it be improved?

10. Which of the following methods best describes your teaching?

Democratic

Semi-democratic

Authoritarian

Other: _____

11. Do you encourage parent conferences and visitations to your class?

Always

Never

Occasionally

*Leave blank if not applicable to 4th grade level.

C. HOMEWORK PRACTICES (PLEASE CIRCLE)

1. Do you assign homework as defined?

Always

Never

Occasionally

2. If you believe in assigning homework, please answer the following:

a. In what grade do you feel homework should be first assigned?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Other: _____

b. How many hours of homework should a child of the 4th grade be assigned per night?

Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hr. 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 hrs. Other: _____

c. How many hours of homework should a child of the 5th grade be assigned per night?

Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hr. 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 hrs. Other: _____

d. How many hours of homework should a child of the 6th grade be assigned per night?

Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hr. 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 hrs. Other: _____

3. If you assign homework, which of the following reasons do you believe justifies your action?

a. Not enough hours in day to teach everything required.

b. Need for drill.

c. Need for development of responsibility.

d. Other (please state): _____

4. If you do not assign homework, which of the following reasons do you believe justifies your action?

a. Too much work.

b. Homework does not foster learning.

c. Conflicts with parents.

d. Other (please state): _____

5. In what subjects do you assign homework?

Arithmetic Spelling Science Social Studies

Penmanship Reading Health English

Other: _____

6. What days of the week do you usually assign homework?

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Weekend

7. On the average, how many hours of homework per night do you assign?

Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hr.

$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hr.

1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.

$1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 hrs.

Other: _____

8. Do you individualize homework assignments?

Always

Never

Occasionally

9. Do you give pupils time to copy down the assignments?

Always

Never

Occasionally

10. Are your pupils allowed to do homework in their spare time?

Always

Never

Occasionally

11. Do you explain the homework assignment beforehand?

Always

Never

Occasionally

12. Do you check the homework after it has been turned in?

Always

Never

Occasionally

13. Do you use homework as a method of punishment?

Always

Never

Occasionally

14. Do you explain to your pupils why they are given homework?

Yes

No

15. Do you explain to parents why and how often their children are assigned homework?

Yes

No

16. If graded, do you use the grades earned in homework in evaluating the pupil?

Always

Never

Occasionally

17. Do you feel that all the results of learning can be measured by standardized achievement tests?

Yes

No

Undecided

If answer is no, please state briefly why: _____

18. Have you experienced any conflict with parents on the assignment of homework?

Always

Never

Occasionally

If you have, what was the basis of the conflict?

APPENDIX B

C O P Y

April 2, 1959

Dear Parents:

I am presently engaged in a research project to gather material for use in my master's thesis. The proposed title of my thesis is: "An Evaluation of Current Homework Practices in Grades 4, 5, and 6 of the Bremerton Public Schools." This study is being undertaken with the approval of the Graduate Faculty of Central Washington College of Education and the Superintendent's Office of the Bremerton School District, as well as the Bremerton School Board.

The successful completion of this project may lead to a better understanding of current homework practices being employed in the grades mentioned, and may foster better relationship among parents, teachers, pupils, and administrators. This study is not intended to criticize any current homework practices in this area. The main purpose of this study is for research and evaluation only, and the results of the findings will be sent to the Superintendent's Office.

Enclosed is a questionnaire which your child has brought home. I shall appreciate your giving a few minutes of your time to fill out the questionnaire as completely and frankly as possible. After you have completed the questionnaire, please place it in the self-addressed envelope, seal it, and have your child return it to his teacher by April 15. Please do not write your name. Your questionnaire will not be identified as yours in any way.

If you have more than one child in grades 4, 5, or 6, please fill out each questionnaire that each child brings home.

Because of the varied definitions of the term "homework," I have taken Webster's definition for the purpose of this study. In answering the questionnaire, please keep the following in mind: Homework applies to "any assignment for study or preparation outside the classroom."

C O P Y

I shall appreciate your earnest cooperation in order that this research may be based on as complete a return as possible.

Thank you for your kind cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ DONALD M. FUJIMOTO
Donald M. Fujimoto
Fifth Grade Teacher
Naval Avenue School

Encls: Questionnaire to Parents
Self-addressed envelope

QUESTIONNAIRE TO PARENTS

A. PERSONAL DATA (PLEASE CIRCLE)

1. Person completing this questionnaire: Mother Father

Both Parents Other (please state): _____

2. Age of Father: 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-65

3. Age of Mother: 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-65

4. Marital Status: Married Divorced Widowed Separated

Other: _____

5. Number of children in school (kindergarten through college):

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

6. Educational background of Father (circle highest grade completed):

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Did he attend college? Yes No

If he received a degree, what degree? _____

7. Educational background of Mother (circle highest grade completed):

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Did she attend college? Yes No

If she received a degree, what degree? _____

8. Father's occupation: _____

9. Mother's occupation: _____

10. Family annual income group: Less than \$2500 \$2501-\$4000

\$4001-\$5000 \$5001-\$6000 \$6001-\$7000 Over \$7000

11. Racial ancestry: _____

12. Church preference: _____

13. In what grade is the child who brought home this questionnaire?

4th

5th

6th

14. Do you belong to the P.T.A.?

Yes

No

15. Do you attend P.T.A. meetings?

Always

Never

Occasionally

B. OPINION ABOUT HOMEWORK (PLEASE CIRCLE)

1. Do you approve of your child being assigned homework?

Yes

No

Undecided

Please state briefly the reason for your answer:

2. If you approve of homework, please answer the following:

a. In what grade do you feel homework should be first assigned?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Other: _____

b. How many hours of homework should a child of the 4th grade be assigned per night?

Less than ½ hr. ½ to 1 hr. 1 to 1½ hrs.

1½ to 2 hrs. Other: _____

c. How many hours of homework should a child of the 5th grade be assigned per night?

Less than ½ hr. ½ to 1 hr. 1 to 1½ hrs.

1½ to 2 hrs. Other: _____

d. How many hours of homework should a child of the 6th grade be assigned per night?

Less than ½ hr. ½ to 1 hr. 1 to 1½ hrs.

1½ to 2 hrs. Other: _____

3. Does your child bring home any homework?

Yes

No

Unknown

4. Do you approve of the type of homework your child is currently assigned?

Yes

No

Undecided

5. In what subjects does your child have homework?

Arithmetic

Spelling

Science

Social Studies

Penmanship

Reading

Health

English

Other: _____

6. On what days does your child have homework?

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Weekend

7. On the average, how many hours per night does your child spend on homework?

Less than ½ hr.

½ to 1 hr.

1 to 1½ hrs.

1½ to 2 hrs.

Other: _____

8. Does your child understand his homework assignments?

Always

Never

Not always

9. To your knowledge, is your child given time to write down his assigned homework so he knows exactly what he is to do?

Always

Never

Not always

10. To your knowledge, is your child allowed to do some of his homework in school during his spare time?

Always

Never

Occasionally

11. Do you or anyone else help your child with his homework?

Always

Never

Occasionally

12. If he does receive help, in what way and to what extent?

a. Help with every problem.

b. Clarify difficult problems only.

(more on next page)

- c. Just see that the assignment is done.
- d. Check problems after he completes homework.
- e. Other: _____
-

13. Do you feel that your child is assigned homework as punishment?

Always

Never

Occasionally

14. Does your child understand why he is assigned homework?

Yes

No

15. Do you understand why and how often your child is given homework?

Yes

No

16. Does your child have a quiet study period at home?

Always

Never

Occasionally

17. Does your child have access to reference books at home (i.e., dictionary, encyclopedia, periodicals, etc.)?

Yes

No

18. Does your child do more work than he is required to do, on his own free will?

Always

Never

Occasionally

19. Does your child do his homework without being persuaded?

Always

Never

Occasionally

20. Do you allow your child to watch TV before he has completed his homework?

Always

Never

Occasionally

21. Does your child do household chores willingly and voluntarily?

Always

Never

Occasionally

22. Do you have other children in school who also have homework?

Yes

No

23. In what afterschool activities does your child participate (i.e., music lessons, clubs, sports, newsboy, etc.)?

24. How many hours a day does your child spend on these outside activities?

1 hr. 2 hrs. 3 hrs. 4 hrs. 5 hrs. Other: _____

25. On what days does he participate in these activities?

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Weekend

26. What is your opinion on the amount of homework assigned to your child?

Too much

Not enough

No complaints

27. What are your complaints, if any, of the homework program which your child now has?

28. What suggestions can you offer to improve his homework program?

29. Have you ever had conferences with your child's teacher?

Yes

No

30. What is your relationship toward your child's teacher?

Friendly

Hostile

Neutral

To what reason do you attribute this feeling?

31. What is your child's attitude toward his present teacher?

Friendly

Hostile

Neutral

Has he had this same attitude toward his previous teachers?

32. What sex is your child's teacher?

Male

Female

33. In what age group is your child's teacher?

Young (21-30)

Older (31-40)

Middle aged (over 40)

APPENDIX C

C O P Y

February, 1935

Dear Teachers:

In connection with an investigation of homework procedure which I am conducting under the supervision of several members of the faculty of Teachers College, Columbia University, I have selected several classes as an experimental group in which no homework will be given during this Spring term. The following 5B and 7B classes will participate in the experiment: It is necessary to confine all study to the regular school hours.

I trust that you will co-operate with me to the extent that you will refrain from assigning any work or study to be done at home by any of the children in these classes. As a teacher of one of the experimental classes, will you please observe the following instructions:

1. Arrange your work so that whatever study periods you feel it necessary to assign may occur during school hours.
2. Announce to the classes involved that there will be no homework during the present term in these particular classes.
3. State in reply to inquisitive parents that you believe it is advantageous to the child to do all his work during school hours under proper supervision.
4. Accept any homework that is brought in voluntarily by any child, but do not rate or score it.
5. Praise voluntary homework if you feel it is praiseworthy but do not do so in such a way as to make the child feel that homework is required.

I am sure that I need not caution you against telling either the children or their parents that homework is not being assigned because of an experiment, inasmuch as you are surely aware that such procedure might invalidate the results.

.....Principal

APPENDIX D

00152

C O P Y

February, 1935

Dear Teachers:

In connection with an investigation of homework procedure which I am conducting under the supervision of several members of the faculty of Teachers College, Columbia University, I have selected several classes as a control group in which homework will be given during the present term. The following 5B and 7B classes will take part in the experiment:

I trust that you will co-operate with me to the extent that you will assign work to the children in these classes to be done at home. Since this study is not concerned with measuring teaching ability, but rather with the effects of homework, conduct your classes in your customary way, thereby relieving any unnecessary strain and preserving the natural situation. As a teacher of one of the control classes, will you kindly observe the following instructions:

1. Assign homework daily.
2. Check, rate, and score all homework.
3. In arriving at a child's standing, take into consideration all homework.
4. Use the Excerpts on Home Study as a guide to the kinds and quantity of homework.

I am sure that I need not caution you against telling the children that they are taking part in an experiment, inasmuch as you are surely aware of the fact that such procedure might invalidate the results.

.....Principal